FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Volume XX, Number 5, October 1969

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Our purpose: To promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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ECUMENICAL PRAYER

Recently, a group of religious leaders—Protestants, Catholics, and Jews—got together and took a long, hard look at New York, a city divided by special-interest groups and polarized by racial tensions. They wrote a prayer to be recited by congregations of all faiths:

Let not the spirit of citadels and fortresses lock us into narrow groups, suspicious, distrustful, prone to hate . . . Help us talk to each other, to understand, to trust.

Open us to the workings of change so essential to life and growth.

Guard us against making any verbal or mental slight or insult, gross or sophisticated, against any person or group.

Keep before our minds how this affronts Thy image of every man.

Make us, indeed, a community, not a scattering of encampments.

Reprinted by courtesy of WCBS Radio, Bill McGuire, Director of Information Services.

EDITORIAL

Fall is my favorite season. Which is not to slight the other seasons, but the colors, the after-the-ball-is-over second-wind, the cyclic briskness, are conducive to thought—the kind that must be done with the mind's sinews.

Yes, spring is impetuous and all that, and I love being a Good Samaritan green thumb to a noyade of life that can hardly wait to upstage all the life it's destined to replace. Birth. Who can resist it? (But, then, it's almost too obvious—like an elephant standing on one's foot.)

Winter is the sullen, ashes-to-ashes time, stark and durable like a far-away train whistle or the blink of a stone lion's eye. Tenebrous and tip-toey. The discontent of our winter: Embalmed hopes skiing away from the sun. Death? Perhaps. (Or perhaps not, the ursine near-thing, a terminal suspension.)

Summer is a summary festival. Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo. Grapes for the sower. Sunshine staircases for the architects among us and within us. An energetic lassitude. A Dufy sea, a Dufay song. A tincture of starscapes and vanilla ice cream from the hand-cranked freezer and the gamboling voices of children testing the illusion that freedom is limitless. Out of doors, sweet. Over the horizon, more. All of it / all of it. Knowledge soars and

seeps: the strange beautiful weed in the corner of some foreign field, the real make-believe of Monopoly in the quiet of an afternoon. To be repeated, this benign circularity. There! Growing, growing, grown.

The seasons' analogues are the spaces in between, the solute recess that's like the beckoning of wisdom. So imperceptibly do these calendar mirrors exchange icicles for blossoms, turn words into wood, hustle experience into character, but hearten sachet into faith. Every cut-on-the-dotted-line quarter of life is mystical.

But the quickening of the minutes and hours cast in birds and stones and weather vanes congeals, suddenly and searchingly. Summer is over and gone; autumn is. How did it happen, the outstretched tree fingers wearing another wedding ring? How did it happen, the senses poignant with unannounced memories, fragile, marine, and clinging?

Summer was. Zip, the snap of a football. Presto, the precision of an alchemist with golden recognition. A line has been crossed, that's the contour of this season. A LINE HAS BEEN CROSSED. The looped thread of conscience. (April is not the cruelest month, then, except for poets.)

Autumn is the vigil of the seasons, the prayer, the reflection of reflection. Watch with fingertips or taste with ears when nature's at prayer. She puts on her Joseph's-coat of vestments, confesses clouds, tocsins streams. The faithful flock, the faithful follow. The sermon is old and implicit,BEAR ALL OF LIFE.

The leaves may fall, but consecrated. The fields may disappear, but risen. Even the grass that cusions the awe in us may wither, but healed. This, too, will pass, but it will pass again. That is the great law, to honor life everlastingly.

Autumn can only express itself in paradox, like faith. The veriest leaf that falls may agree with Mark Twain, "To the unconsciously irreverent, all things are reverent," and fall secure in leafdom and the greater glory of things. The least geometric of creatures will hearken to that God described by St. Augustine:"... an infinite sphere the circumference of which is nowhere, the center of which is everywhere," and thereby praise the mathematical spirit that makes such a revelation instinctive.

Opening ourselves to revelation, that's the message of the season. This is the time of our lives, any season. There is no end. Only beginnings.

—J. W.

IN RETROSPECT *Paul Waterman*

White magnolia.
Wind caught string in its branches...
A tugging bluejay.

PLEA TO AGE OF AQUARIUS

Velta Myrle Allen

Water-bearer
Pouring out peace to bless us.
Let your love-rays
Fall on us and caress us;
Purify us, Aquarius,
Water-bearer!

Brilliant Star Host,
Amiable, trusting Aquarius,
Flash your radiance
Down upon us and bear us
To the promised
Age of World Peace, Aquarius,
Water-bearer!

HOPE FOR NOW

Antoinette Daria

In this selfish world
Love for neighbor will conquer
If done, for God's sake.

PRAYING WITH THE SICK

Mildred Long

Prayer for the sick has taken on a new emphasis in our time. We know that God honors such prayer and many lives have been changed thereby.

But we also know that prayer for the sick, to be most effective, must somehow involve the right attitude and action of the sick person himself. Therefore, praying *with* the sick becomes more vital.

Students of this phase of prayer are unanimously agreed on certain points. Much sickness—most sickness, perhaps all sickness (even accidents)—is caused by personal imbalance. The imbalance is in the emotions, the feeling state, in confused thinking, in deep desires unfulfilled. Healing must begin there. Medicines cannot touch this part of one's nature. They can only affect body tissue, blood flow, heart beat, etc. But prayer which does touch the heart-and-soul nature of man can change feeling, emotion, and desire. When, therefore, the sick person cooperates with the intent of the prayer, healing results.

To "cooperate" with prayer means: to *desire* what is asked for, to *visualize* wholeness rather than illness, to *unite* the forces of mind and body toward healing, and to *remove* obstacles of emotion or thinking that prevent healing. In other words, to unify the entire personality toward healing. This is *faith*, but it involves works as well. So healing becomes spiritual, as well as physical.

All students of spiritual healing agree on a few points. First of all, they find the greatest of all hindrances to spiritual wholeness is unforgiveness. To entertain a spirit of hatred, antagonism, resentment, and the like toward anyone or any circumstance breaks

one of God's fundamental laws. The books are full of illustrations of relief from arthritis, heart ailments, and many other symptoms by the act of forgiveness: genuine, deep, sincere, which replaces hate with love and compassion. The act of forgiveness must also be performed toward oneself; for, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive yours." It is impossible to receive God's forgiveness for my sins and sinning, unless I make my heart ready to receive by offering my forgiveness to another, and to myself.

Sin, by whatever name, separates us from God's blessings. Therefore, we need to repent of all known sin, ask forgiveness, receive forgiveness, and clear the way for physical renewal; for, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." The body, sooner or later, reproduces in the cells the emotions entertained in the heart.

Another attitude required for healing is the complete surrender of self-desire and self-interest to the Father: the turning over of oneself to Him, to His control. Even as Jesus prayed we must learn to pray, "Father, not my will but thine be done." This gives God a chance to change us—and even environmental conditions which have caused part of our imbalance.

A third thing needed is for the patient to adopt an attitude of mind that affirms wholeness. To feel sick, to think in terms of illness, to talk about it, to feel sorry for oneself, to give in to weakness and inertia, to wallow in misery—these and all kindred feelings are huge barriers to the healing of the body. To *believe*, to *affirm*, to *act* in line of healing is *faith*. And faith of this kind must often be built before healing can come.

Now to pray *with* sick people as well as *for* them helps them to grasp some of these things and act on them; for the patient must

learn cooperation with divine laws for healing to be permanent. When faith is stimulated to a consuming fire, healing can be instantaneous. More often, it becomes the driving force to stimulate desire and encourage the patient to adopt a program that results in healing. Especially is this true in chronic illness. "Faith without works is dead."

I would like to illustrate out of my own experience.

First, the matter of guilt: to be unforgiving, to fail to forgive oneself, or to entertain any hostility or hate (for any reason whatsoever) causes a hidden sense of guilt. Guilt produces fear. The fear may be nameless, hidden, unrecognized until some tragedy, disaster, accident, or sickness overtakes the individual.

In 1936 I suffered a complete "nervous breakdown." After six years of incapacity a masseuse came to me who treated my body, enlightened my mind, prayed with me and for me, and started me toward the recognition of God's in-dwelling presence and power. Later, a doctor and his wife took me into their home and taught me about guilt and fear and how to overcome them. Still later, a psychologist unearthed from my inner consciousness a childhood experience which was charged with guilt. When this came to light, I knew my freedom was at hand. But still it did not come immediately. A Prayer Fellowship to which I belonged was the means of teaching me more and, finally, bringing about the desired results. After thirteen years of praying, learning, doing, I was completely released from an emotional complex that had hindered my walking and my functioning normally.

This was a chronic case involving a severe physical injury, a deep-seated emotional conflict, an inability to forgive myself, to relax and let go to God. But by the combination of these three principles of healing I have mentioned, at length I was set free and

there has been no return of the particular affliction that held me prisoner.

In one of my prayer groups there was a dear lady with a heart ailment. Putting into practice what I tried to teach them, she began a program of early morning meditation before an open window. She breathed in God's good fresh air, thus activating the lungs, and no doubt equalizing the heart action. She gave herself repeatedly to God for the healing of all negative emotions. Before long she left off the heart medicine and her body began to function well. I have known her these 20 years and there has been no recurrence of heart trouble.

At a summer camp I went into the Infirmary one morning and found two junior-age girls sick with indigestion. One was still in pain having passed a sleepless night. I asked her what she wanted most right now, and she said, "Oh, to sleep." So with her permission I put my hands on her stomach and explained that sometimes the valve opening out and down did not function well. I asked her to visualize that valve opening, closing, opening, closing, in perfect rhythm. She closed her eyes, and I continued this suggestion in a quiet voice, all the while praying silently. In a remarkably short time she was asleep. I turned to see if I could minister to the other little girl. She, too, was fast asleep. When they awoke they were both well and went to the noon meal.

When Jesus was on earth, He used various methods and means as He brought healing. So God does today. He works through those who are in tune with Him and are clear channels. Healing comes in a variety of forms to people who are open to receive and who have faith to believe. Prayer is the power line over which God's Spirit flows into our hearts. To pray *for* the sick and *with* the sick is part of our ministry as we try to be co-laborers with Him.

BY SELF CONDEMNED

Emma S. McLaughlin

This is no mountaintop; this place I sit
can boast no city spread beneath my feet,
with spires and turrets floating on a sheet
of morning haze and yet he offers it
to me if I will hear him and obey
without the slightest quiver of regret,
for he insists there is no other way
to crowning laurel. While I fumble cards
dealt out to me he whispers in my ear,
'Lay down the one marked "friend".' Betray a trust?
My mind is sifting honor's crumbling shards.

Even to win this game and win I must,
(or so I reasoned when the game began,
when first he came to tempt the soul of man
with dreams of glory rising out of dust)
I turn away, for I must give some thought
as to the outcome, weigh the consequence
of devilish bargaining. My world turns green,
sky, water, houses bask in envy's sheen.
O mighty legions, come to my defense.

I cannot walk in stealth, nor deal in pain.
Christ, You were tempted, how did You resist
his cunning wiles? Perhaps You formed a fist
to keep from grasping eagerly at gain.
I am so human, passionate and weak;
I covet in my heart and often find
that I am powerless to turn my cheek
and risk another scar. I am the worst
when I most desperately will the best.
Surely, of all Your children, I am cursed.

I hear a mallet pound and wince in pain.
They crucified *You*, yet *I* clench *my* hand;
for reasons I will never understand
I drive nails in myself as though insane.
I hang in desolation on a cross
and thrust into my side the shaft of steel.
Aware all earthly glory is but dross,
I long to crush the serpent with my heel.
There is a difference, my Lord, You died
for other men and were by others slain,
while daily I climb up Golgotha's plain
and there, by my own hand, am crucified.

Last year Swami Ritajananda, President of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Center at Gretz, France, convened a conference in which participants were invited to explain the teachings given in their religions on the subject of salvation; and the *idea* of salvation in various religions was the theme for the January 1969 issue of VEDANTA, a trimonthly publication of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Center.

In the August issue, Swami Ritajananda himself discussed the idea of salvation in one of the two great systems of Hindu thought, the Advaïta-Vedanta of Samkarāchārya.

The second of the series by Jean Cardinal Daniélou, Society of Jesus, was an extemporaneous address most aptly placing Christianity in the midst of Swami Ritajananda's hope that "You will find evidence of the religious thought of our time and a sign of the good will and understanding which animated these meetings" of representatives of many religions. Cardinal Daniélou was recently elevated to Cardinal by Pope Paul VI.

Special acknowledgment is made to Mrs. Samuel Chamberlain, Trustee of FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER, for her dedicated and meticulous translations.

THE IDEA OF SALVATION ACCORDING TO CHRISTIANITY

Rev. Father Jean Daniélou, S. J.

I thank the Swami for having invited me today. We have the opportunity of meeting fairly often at the gatherings where representatives of different religions converse together to try to understand each other better. So today I shall talk to you of the conception of salvation according to Christianity.

It is evident that Christianity, like all religions, wishes to bring to man a way of salvation, a way of liberation, a way of wisdom. And in this sense, it must be said that there is something in common between religious men of all religions; it is precisely the fact of considering the interior man and his relation with God as the essential of man. There is a very great problem in the world today, that, in effect, of modern life which turns man more toward the exterior world and toward its conquest rather than toward the interior man.

We think this is the reason why so many men are unhappy—precisely because their life is entirely toward the search for exterior satisfactions in the order of pleasure, of ambition, of money, and thus they do not know that which Christ called "the unique need," the only thing that finally can bring happiness; the precious pearl spoken of in the evangelist's parable, union with God by the development and flowering of the inner man.

From this point of view, it is evident that for the Christian, salvation will constitute first of all—and this I think is common to Christians, Hindus, Musulmen, to men of all religions—the call to

Note: Musulman, i.e., Moslem or Mohammedan. The translator has retained the form common to French and English.

a certain conversion which turns away from attachment to exterior and finally fugitive benefits, to turn man toward interior realities and make him understand that it is in the interior man, in the possession of goodness and of truth, that he may alone find peace.

This is why salvation, may one say to begin with, will consist in a certain conversion by which man will discover that he makes himself unhappy, precisely in pursuing everywhere realities which cannot satisfy him and will seek a return to God by a quest for the Absolute. It is certain that this is not only the fact of a theoretical attitude but should be expressed by spiritual exercise, prayer, discourse, meditation, whatever may be the words by which one designates that which represents the progressive rediscovery by man of his profound "I" and his interior being.

In this regard, I have often been struck, in studying the religious texts of other religions, by seeing how on this level we find exactly the same attitudes and, basically, when I read the Bhagavad-Gita or the same order of beautiful text by the Musulman Mystic Al-Hallaj, this converts me as in the reading of the *Imitation of Jesus Christ*, that admirable introduction to the interior life of Christians.

Meditation then, which helps us to rediscover ourselves in freeing us from exterior things, which is the act, surely, of a certain unification of the attention which removes us from diversity, from the multiplicity of things to make us rediscover a certain unity; but of which I would say it is even more a conversion of the heart, for, after all, that which separates us from God is less the multiplicity of images than the multiplicity of desires.

Basically, we realize this when we try to pray. Very often that which hinders us from praying is that we think *inevitably*, be it of things we desire or that we have to do, be it in regretting

certain things that have happened to us: It is all the little wounds to our pride, or such and such projects which prevent our heart from becoming stayed.

This is why the very condition for prayer, I think, is a certain interior detachment by which we loosen our grasp in some way, with respect to all these little attachments which prevent us from being internally free, in such a way as to acquire this kind of spiritual liberty which permits us to fix our hearts there where the true joys are.

There is in this sense a whole interior asceticism which is the very condition of this rediscovery of our deeper being, and this rediscovery constitutes the first aspect of the way of salvation. I would say that if we thus enter into ourselves, it is not in order to find ourselves there. Moreover, one may say that very often one of the difficulties of prayer is precisely the danger of stopping with oneself. I mean here by "self" all that represents the preoccupations that are ours; I would even say regret for our sins, even the desire we would have to be better.

In reality, it must go even beyond this, because at this level we are still at that of the particular mind, at the level of the will to acquire something. Now, that which prayer should teach us is a sort of total disinterestedness which makes us turn our regard away from ourselves in order to turn it toward God.

What is prayer finally if not this discovery of God and this wonder before God. This is what is expressed by the words of the Christian liturgy, so often employed, but which are, moreover, words found in all religions; it is the word of praise, the word of adoration, the word of glorification, the word of actions of grace.

In reality, one is quite mistaken in thinking that prayer signifies turning to God in order to ask Him for something. This is a humble form of prayer not to be scorned; it is certain that for the poor men that we are when put to the test, it is normal to speak simply to God of our needs. But it is evident that if our prayer stopped at this level, it would be a very low form of prayer, for it would be far more a case of asking God to do our will than, as we say it in the prayer of Christ, "Thy will be done!"

Does our prayer not often wish to bend God to our desires rather than to bend us to the desires of God? This is why the essence of prayer is to be a sort of disappropriation, a dispossession of ourselves by which our regard, turning away from ourselves, may progressively open to the splendor of God and thus be illumined by its rays. In this sense, prayer is a meeting with God because, in fact, God is there, everywhere present. God is present in this room. God is present in this nature which surrounds us.

God is present, but it is we who are absent. And in consequence, prayer is to realize this presence of God. As Saint Paul says in the Acts of the Apostles: "In Him we live and more and have our being."

We are in some s ay immersed in this mysterious presence and action of God. Precisely, prayer is to discover this presence of God as He pervades all things; and beyond this presence of God in all things is the reality of God in Himself. It must be said that there precisely is the very essence of the prayer of the great mystics, of the great saints.

For them God has become so intensely real that this reality of God obscures from their eyes the brightness of earthly things, and their heart is so seized, so captivated, so fascinated by the splendor of God that Love tears them away from all the rest. This

is what the words of ecstasy, of release from self, express: words which state finally nothing but the very natural and very simple. This weight of the glory of God so intense draws the heart by a sort of invisible magnetization.

As Saint Augustine said:

"Thou hast made us for Thee, Lord, and our heart is anxious until it rests in Thee."

It is thus that, little by little, the soul opens progressively to this discovery of the divine splendors, enters into the domain of contemplation, and beyond all agitation learns to stop, for the great sickness of modern man is that he never knows how to find rest. Now, as Christ has said it:

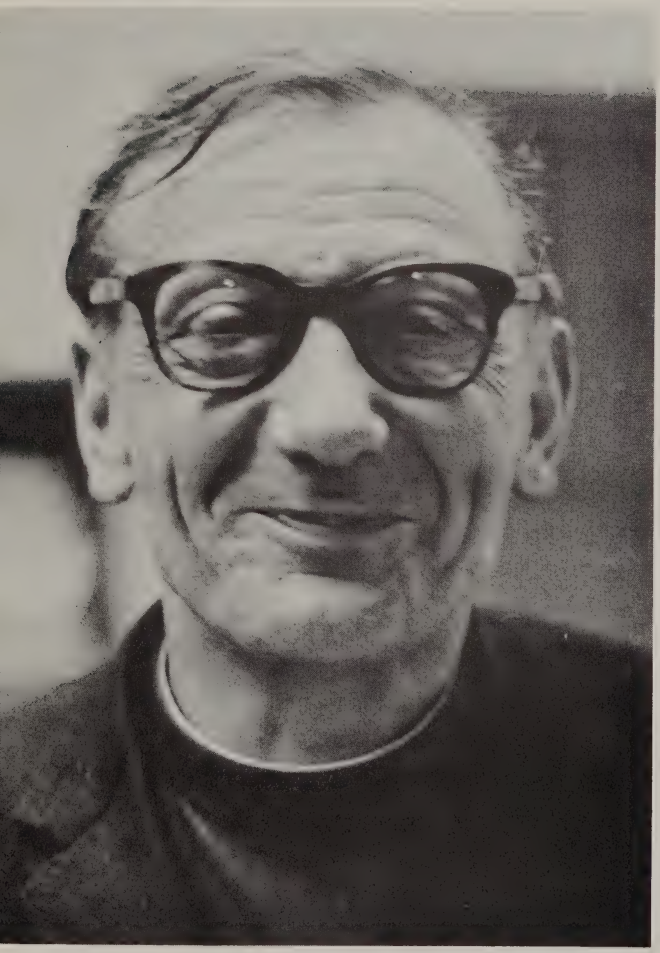
"Come to me, all you that labor, and are burdened. . .and you shall find rest to your souls."

In effect, our hearts cannot rest in the possession of exterior good, for none of these goods fulfill them; but when our hearts are filled with God, at that moment they no longer need to be disturbed. Precisely, there is nothing to be found beyond this. When one has found *The All*, how can one stop again to search for that which is only partial? This is why the heart which has found the plenitude of God has also found the plenitude of peace. It has no longer need for anything other; it possesses its Beloved, as says the Song of Songs:

"I found him and I will not let him go."

That is to say that, henceforth, this good that I have found, I can never be separated from it.

What I have said up to now, a Christian is saying. I think, for the greater part at least, a Hindu would also say it, and a



JEAN CARDINAL DANIÉLOU

Musulman as well. That is to say that this expresses the fundamental appeal of God who, in our hearts, begs us to return into ourselves in order to discover Him and to converse with Him. Will, then, the question of salvation present something particular in Christianity? The Swami himself said a while ago that there was in each religion a particular voice, a special inspiration.

It is evident that that which will play a very great role in the Christian view of salvation (we have already talked of this, the Swami and I) is that which Christians call grace. It is certain that here we touch upon something which is essential for a Christian. Saint Paul, for instance, repeats often that it is only by grace that we are saved. There is, then, no salvation outside of grace.

What I would like to explain here is exactly what Saint Paul, and therefore a Christian, understands by this. A Christian understands by this that the heart that seeks God, that thirsts to be united with Him, to lose itself in Him, this heart remains meanwhile incapable, powerless to lay hold of that which it desires. It is in a sort of infinite quest, it always seeks and this seeking is not vain; it signifies a real discovery of something, but meanwhile God always escapes it. It can never fully discover Him and possess Him.

Why is this? It is because, first, for the Bible, for the Old Testament, then for the Jews and, following them, for the Christians, to the extent that they depend on the Jewish Bible, God is absolutely transcendant, absolutely inaccessible. His mystery is something that man cannot penetrate by his own powers. His plenitude of being represents not simply a more intense degree of that which is the spirit of man, but is really totally foreign to him by the plenitude of His being and of His holiness.

Saint John of the Cross, one of the great masters of Christian mysticism, said that God remains always for us "the foreign isles."

It is something which never arises from that which is familiar to us, but is always other, to an extent for which we have no adequate comparison.

The Christian mystics expressed it in describing their spiritual experience. For example, Saint John of the Cross says that God is darkness. Not in the malevolent sense of the darkness of ignorance, but in the sense, he says, that the splendor of God is of such an intensity that the gaze cannot bear it. God is a darkness because He blinds us on account of the very intensity of His light. The fragility of man cannot bear this weight of God.

In the Bible there is in expression which recurs a number of times and which is very mysterious:

"One cannot see God without dying."

This phrase may seem strange to us; it recurs often in the Old Testament. It signifies that the density of divine existence is such that it is in some way unbearable. If God manifested Himself totally as He is, man would be crushed by the very intensity of His being.

Another great Christian spiritual being that I have studied particularly, Gregory of Nyssa, who was a Greek, a Cappadocian of the fourth century, says that facing God we are like a man on the edge of a cliff in the presence of the abyss and that, to penetrate this abyss, he has no instrument; that this abyss gives him a kind of vertigo. God is like a vertiginous abyss before which the man who seeks Him feels himself at a certain moment totally powerless, for which he has no longer any instrument, neither in his intelligence, nor in his imagination, nor in his sensibilities, which totally escapes his grasp; and he is seized at that moment by a sort of despair, for, in fact—and one may say that this is the paradox of the human heart—he wants to find God and unite himself with Him

but he feels on the other hand that he is impotent by his own powers, to leap the abyss which separates him from God.

One can say of this experience that we are, simultaneously, made for God and thirsting for Him, but at the same time, in the presence of God, we are disarmed, we have the impression of a radical impotence. This is certainly, in the Christian conception of salvation, the fundamental experience. It signifies that salvation is something that we cannot give to ourselves of ourselves. Salvation can only be given us by another.

This is to say, in other words, that the abyss separates us from God and that we are incapable of surmounting it. But God, He can surmount it. We will be able to reach God if He first comes to us. And this, we know, is precisely the fundamental Christian affirmation when we say that salvation is given us by Jesus Christ.

What is Jesus Christ for a Christian?

He is precisely God come to us. He is this gesture of Divine Love who, seeing that we were powerless to come to God, took, Himself, the first step. He came to get us here where we are, coming to grasp our humanity in order, having embraced it, to lift it up unto Himself and permitting us then, following Him, to penetrate into the depths, into the abysses which belong to the mysterious Trinity.

This is what Christ signifies for the Christian. He is not simply a Master of wisdom, the one who would have taught us a way to attain to God, He is God Himself for the Christian, who alone could introduce us to the interior of the life of God. The Christian believes that this act was accomplished when the Verb of God, His Word, came to take up the flesh of man in the bosom of the Virgin Mary. And having taken this flesh, like unto our own, having purified it in the blood of His Cross, introduced it by the

mystery of His Ascension into the depths of the Trinity, in such a manner that, henceforth, there is, like a part of ourselves, a part of ourselves, a part of our humanity which, having been introduced into the depths of God, makes it possible for us, in our turn, to attain to Him.

As Saint John said at the beginning of his gospel:

"No man hath seen God... the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him."

He has made Him known to us because, living Himself in this glory, belonging thus to the very world of God, He alone could introduce us into this world which was inaccessible to us.

In consequence, we understand at that moment the new element that will be introduced into the interior experience for a Christian. We have said that there was in every man this search, and that this search was holy and blessed in all men. On the other hand, we said that this search for God could not fully attain its object because of the infinite transcendance of God.

The experience of the Christian will be that he must depend on the grace given by Christ in order to advance in this interiod experience. This is what is signified by the word "faith." This means that faith signifies essentially the gesture by which the Christian confides himself to someone, relies upon someone, abandons himself into the hands of someone, because he knows that by himself he will not really be able to attain union with God, but that he must in some way be lifted up by Christ who alone can lift him beyond himself in order to introduce him into the depths of God.

Gregory of Nyssa used beautiful imagery. You know that Plato speaks of the wings of the soul. He says that the soul is by nature

winged an he means by wings this interior dynamism of the spirit which tends toward God; he describes to us, in the famous myth of Phaedrus, the fall of the soul as the loss of wings. We are, he says, like winged beings who should circulate in the depths of heaven, but we have lost our wings and this is why we grovel upon the earth. Gregory of Nyssa takes up this image again but, for him, the wings are not the dynamism which lifts up the spirit in a certain way into the depths of heaven; these are the wings, says he, of the dove because in the Gospel the Holy Spirit is described as a dove.

Like a dove The Holy Spirit descended upon Christ in the scene of the baptism. And the Holy Spirit here signifies the "pneuma" * in the style of biblical language, evoking the image of the breath. But the breath here is the very breath of God, that is to say, the irresistible power by which God alone can operate the divine works. It is the blast of the tempest, of the hurricane; it is the irresistible wind against which nothing can resist. It is the breathing by which God can create all things from nothing and by which God can make a fragile man to be transformed, divinized, vivified.

This is why we must have the wings of the dove to be lifted up by this power of the Spirit and that we may be able to leap the abysses which separate us from God and to be introduced into God.

In the conception, in the Christian experience of salvation for the Christian, a very great role will be played by the spirit of abandon, of confidence, the fact of resting upon....The Christian is conscious of his weakness and of his fragility. He feels himself a sinner and so engaged in all flesh-and-blood realities. Certainly he knows he is capable of something by himself. Otherwise there would be here a sort of quietism which would make no call on human effort.

* Greek: wind, air, or breath; viz., the "breath of life."

Certainly, it is demanded of us to make an effort. All of this ascetic element is something absolutely necessary to the interior life. But this being so, the Christian is conscious that even so he can never go very far and that, if he truly wishes to find God, he cannot do it alone, he absolutely needs God Himself to come to help him. It is only to the degree that he is upheld, lifted, transported by God that he, so small, will thus be able to penetrate into things so immense.

At the very interior of spiritual experience, humility remains possible; this is why it cannot be accompanied by any complacency, for we are profoundly conscious that that which is accomplished in us does not come from ourselves, but comes from another, because we know that from our own depths we cannot draw much that is good and, therefore, that we need to be saved.

This does not signify a resignation of effort, for the Christian feels himself held to accomplish it. In this sense, he does not feel himself different from another, but this is the expression of the fact that, for the mystic, for the spiritual Christian, this effort by himself alone cannot succeed. There must always be this mysterious collaboration which is that of freedom and grace, of which spiritual ones and theologians have always spoken, from Saint Augustine to Karl Barth—to use a great Protestant name of today's world.

Precisely, Saint Augustine remains one of the essential masters of interior experience. He wrote these words which sing in all our memories:

"For our heart is uneasy until it rests in Thee!

"I do not tell thee not to love, I tell thee, change thy love!"

Such words which, throughout his *Confessions*, express one of the deepest interior experiences that he encountered.

Saint Augustine polemicized violently against the Pelagians, so named for a certain Breton monk who had come to Rome and who had maintained that, in reality, virtue and the interior experience were things which depended only on our efforts, that it was solely because of our faint-heartedness that we were not better.

To which Saint Augustine replied, with the greatest energy, that, even if we supplied all the necessary effort, we would still absolutely have the need for God to come and help us, because without Him we could neither eliminate from within ourselves the ground of material and spiritual misery found there, nor, above all, leap the abyss which separates us from the divine darkness into which the Light of God alone can initiate us.

This is why the Christian experience will be a sort of perpetual progress, for God is infinite and we shall never reach the limits (of His being); this is not something that could have an end and that could cease, but a sort of eternal growth in the discovery, ever more marvelous, of the infinite divine riches, of this divine ocean whose limits we shall never attain, but in the midst of which we can advance only in the measure that the very strength of God therein uplifts us and ushers us in little by little.

Here is, I think, that which constitutes at the same time, it seems to me, that which is alike—and there is something very profoundly like—in the search for God and the conception of salvation, as in the union with God beyond all created things. I think in this way, placing the accent on the characteristic point of that which constitutes the properly Christian conception of salvation.

This does not signify that we could not instruct one another, for it is certain that amongst these divers ways in the search for God we can have always many things in common. But at the same time, it is always important to listen to each other.

I would say that God speaks to us by one another and thus, conversing often, something may strike us or touch us which expresses, in effect, that which we seek and which we have felt obscurely without its having been expressed. It is thus that we may help each other to grow together in the search for salvation and in the knowledge and the love of God.

— Translated from the French
by Mrs. Samuel Chamberlain

□

BOY AND GIRL

Ann Mayerson

Little girl-child,
Small boy-child,
Wild and shy
Playing sweetly
With a toy
I pray the joy
You find together
Will be known completely
When you are grown and tall.

●■

FIP'S TWENTY YEARS

Since the last quarter of the century, the idea of the coming together of all faiths has grown until nowadays there are few words more familiar than *ecumenical*. Eighty years ago, the Unity movement was begun. There followed the famous World Faith and Order Conference, which led to the foundation of the World Council of Churches. Most celebrated of all such ventures was Pope John XXIII's Ecumenical Council held in the early 1960's. Not every effort to bring all believers under one roof (which is what *ecumenical*. really means, deriving from the Greek word *oikos* for "dwelling" or "house") became well-known, however. Quietly persevering in its faith in prayer as the common denominator between men of all faiths, Fellowship in Prayer will celebrate its twentieth anniversary on June 5, 1970, which also will be the ninetieth birthday of its late founder, the remarkable Carl Allison Evans.

A not tall, stocky man with very dark brown hair, blue eyes, and a light complexion, mild and kindly though firm when he had to be, Carl Evans was born and raised in Oneida County, New York. He went to public and then business schools in Utica. After graduation, he was employed in the business and mechanical operations of the *Utica Daily Press*. Eight years later, he became membership secretary of Utica's Y.M.C.A. To his disappointment, this branch of the "Y" failed. He was obliged to accept a job as assistant manager with Maher Brothers, a uniform-manufacturer. In the course of twelve years Maher Brothers became the Utica Uniform Company and Carl Evans one of its three partners. He and his wife, the former Emma Jane Cochrane of Utica, a kindergarten teacher, occupied a fine-gabled Victorian house.

In spite of this success, when a call came to him to join the foreign missions board of the Presbyterian

Church, of which he had long been a member and ruling elder, Carl Evans accepted it. He and Mrs. Evans set out for six years at respected Silliman University in the Philippines. He served as treasurer and director of the University band, choir, and orchestra. Later he doubled as business manager of the University. There, from refugees, he heard about the cooperation in China of Roman Catholics, Protestants, Moslems, Buddhists, and others: how they had formed a loose "Association of Religious Believers" for the purpose of putting China's many religions "into readable form" in the midst of a civil war.

With this experience back of them, Carl and Emma Jane Evans came back via Europe to the U.S. He became assistant treasurer for The Christian Colleges in China (afterwards known as The Associated Boards—and finally as The United Board for Christian Colleges in China) and retired, in 1949, as its associate treasurer and associate executive secretary.

1949. . . . It is hard now to recall the near-panic of that year. Although World War II had ended in victory for the U.S., Americans were suffering hysteria, what was then called "the new failure of nerve," much of it based on guilt and fears about the discovery and use of the atom bomb. The situation seemed to pressing that a highly-regarded New York financier, Ferris Booth, published an advertisement in *The New York Times* urging President Truman to establish a Department of Ethics with the purpose of moulding public opinion about use of the bomb and building up Mohammedanism and Confucianism to fight Russia's Communist ideology.

Everything that Carl Evans had ever thought and believed now came into focus. He sat down and composed an answer to Ferris Booth—"a true answer," he said, "being a regeneration of the individual whereby he could recognize the power of God through the combined prayers of all religious faiths."

With the help of sixteen people who subscribed sizeable amounts of money and with a loan from a seventeenth, Carl Evans published his reply in *The New York Times* of December 12, 1949. In bold capitals it announced that "PRAYER IS THE ANSWER" and, after declaring its faith in the power of prayer to create a spiritual renaissance upon this earth, was signed "Fellowship in Prayer." On account of this, December 12 probably has as much claim as June 5 to being the Fellowship's birthday.

While pondering the feasibility of such a fellowship, which he intended to clear away all obstacles of difference between peoples whether the differences were of creed, color, or geography, Carl Evans had been supported by "a Midwest businessman, a New York bank official, a Roman Catholic financial advisor, a lady philanthropist, and a Chinese philosopher." These five people became the original trustees of the Fellowship, which, thanks to the ad in the *Times*, was already attracting kindred spirits from north and south and east and west. Many newspapers, including *The Christian Science Monitor*, gave the ad wide publicity. It was read into The Congressional Record. And so, by June 5, his own seventieth birthday, Carl Evans felt sufficiently encouraged to have the Fellowship incorporated, with the right to accept tax-deductible contributions. He rented an office and proceeded to produce a bimonthly publication called FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER. Its logo always bore the motto of the Fellowship: "For a world united in prayer." The sole ornament of its cover was Durer's beautiful drawing of a pair of praying hands.

Carl Evans carried on for six years. They brought him the satisfaction of seeing the Fellowship flower—members across the country and in thirty nations overseas. But those years also brought the death of his beloved wife and his own increaxing age. In January, 1956, he dies—at the end of a long day in the office of the

Fellowship, "with his boots on," as a memorial to him stated.

With his departure, no possibility seemed to exist for the Fellowship's continuing. But determined pressure for its continuance was brought to bear by members and friends. Their letters poured in, bringing help both spiritual and material. And Kathryn G. Brown, who had served as secretary of the board from the start of the Fellowship, accepted the invitation of the board of trustees to become Executive Secretary. It has been she who almost singlehandedly has seen the Fellowship and all its myriad responsibilities through the succeeding thirteen years of its life.

It is this kind of perseverence and faith which, though not so broadly known to the world, gives Fellowship in Prayer a place beside the renowned work of Unity, of the World Council, of Vatican II. It has the same message as they—that all men who pray are brothers.

LATE HOUR

By Carla Patsuris

Being old as a little boy
He missed the whirling hour
Of childish kiting-joy;
Before the sun's full flower
Falls into the deep of night
And all the romping time is gone
Teach him how to fly a kite.
Evening will be coming on...

HOUSECLEANING

Eleanor Ebersole

Libraries...alive...
change subtly
until one day changes show:

college classics moved out
old novels for trash,

treasures dusted
new ones on the shelf.

IN RETROSPECT

Remelda N. Gibson

This vase
Once fondly held
Yellow dandelions...
My little son's gift of love, when four
Years old.

DIALOG

Kelly Janes

ANGEL
Who will show us any good
Here in this mud,
In these men and women,
Human, all too human?

HOURI
Mud is my name, if not yours.
Who on earth fears
Goodness apart from truth
And beauty? Have more faith.

ANGEL
How can I believe
In what I cannot prove?

HOURI
How can I hope for
What I see more and more?

PLANNING FIP'S TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Joining the Board of Trustees at the close of its meeting on August 14 at the Prince George Hotel in New York City was a group of advisors, contributing editors, and friends. They came because of their interest in Fellowship in Prayer's twentieth anniversary.

This anniversary will be celebrated on June 5, 1970--the anniversary, actually, of the incorporation of the Fellowship. (An earlier date, December 12, 1969, which is the anniversary of the original announcement in the *New York Times* of the founding of the Fellowship was set aside as too close to plan an appropriate celebration.)

The group had been invited by the Executive Secretary and the Executive Director to discuss what form the celebration should take. Every opinion was invited, and the meeting was opened, after prayer, by the Executive Director's reading aloud pertinent passages from letters sent by those who could not be present. Dr. William Hung, President Emeritus, suggested a serious and exhaustive study of religious life during the twenty years of the Fellowship's life: 'something more,' he recommended, 'than dinner-eating and speech-making.' Another member proposed the use of full-page newspaper ads, which would be paid for by businesses both national and local. An advisor from California favored a dinner in New York plus a nationwide prayer vigil. So was the sending of birthday cards to the Fellowship 'with a dollar bill tucked inside each.' A great variety of ideas was expressed. But the fundamental almost unanimous suggestion was that the celebration, in whatever form it finally took, be focused upon prayer.

Those present agreed that prayer was obviously and necessarily the theme for the occasion. 'A world united in prayer,' it was decided, should be the motto of the celebration. It was deemed wise to let the details of the event evolve over the coming months. The first step will be a publicity campaign beginning immediately after Labor Day.

Further details will be announced as they are formulated from the many suggestions offered by our friends in the course of this meeting.

NOTICES and COMMENTS

NEW TRUSTEE. Mrs. Virginia J. Tirado of New York City, Director of the Fellowship of Churches and Synagogues, Inc., and previously an advisor to FIP, was unanimously elected a member of the Board of Trustees on August 14. An experienced musician, Mrs. Tirado founded her fellowship in 1961. It now consists of 54 Protestant churches, 10 Roman Catholic cathedrals, one Greek Orthodox cathedral, four Jewish Reform synagogues in Manhattan.

LIBRARY ADDITIONS. Sherwood Eliot Wirt's *Passport to Life City* (published by Harper & Row) is subtitled 'A Modern Pilgrim's Progress'--and is exactly that: John Bunyan's classic religious masterpiece updated in time, place, and names.

Existentialism and The New Christianity by Harry W. Barnitz (published by Philosophical Library) is that rare thing, an extremely clear discussion of an often obscure subject.

Revised and with new material added, the late C. P. S. Clarke's *Everyman's Book of Saints* (also published by Philosophical Library) catalogues the lives of the most important of the Christian saints. Since 'heroism and holiness' do not date, these sketches offer inspiration as well as fascination to those who are unfamiliar with them.

PROGRESS REPORT. On August 18, Marjorie Weimer moved to the Brandywine Springs Nursing and Convalescent Home, 505 Greenbank Road, Wilmington, Delaware 19808. Future plans include a transfer to another nursing home and then another move to a new home with her husband in Florida. He reported that 'some days we are encouraged on return of motion,' that Marjorie continues to hope to paint and knit again, that she is reasonably comfortable and is looking forward with excitement to their first grandchild in late September. 'Without FIP,' Ray Weimer wrote, 'the road would be a lot tougher. Thanks for the prayers and the booklets, notes, and cards.'

GIVE FIP FOR CHRISTMAS. As the Fellowship celebrates its twentieth anniversary, why not help increase its membership by giving subscriptions to your friends? Begin with the December issue, which is going to be the anniversary issue, numbering more pages than usual and containing memorable selections from the past as well as the best work of current contributors. Either fill out and send in the coupon at the back of this issue. Or write to the Executive Secretary, Fellowship in Prayer, Room 1122, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10010. Cost is three dollars per year.

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